

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 121410Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6620
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 0187

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, RH
SUBJECT: GROWING UNEASE IN WHITE COMMUNITY IN RHODESIA

1. SUMMARY: RECENT WEEKS HAVE SEEN GROWING UNEASE IN WHITE
COMMUNITY OF RHODESIA. IT HAS MANIFESTED ITSELF IN ANTI-
GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS, REALIGNMENT OF OPPOSITION WHITE
PARTIES AND INCREASING OUTFLOW OF WHITE RHODESIAN RESIDENTS.
END SUMMARY.

2. AT TIME OF SEPTEMBER 24 SMITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE
OF PRINCIPLE OF MAJORITY RULE, EMBASSY SOURCES STATE THAT
AVERAGE WHITE RHODESIAN WAS ENCOURAGED AND HOPEFUL. ALTHOUGH
THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT ON MECHANICS OF TRANSFER, "CHAMPAGNE
GLASSES CLICKED ALL OVER SALISBURY" BECAUSE THE LIGHT COULD
NOW BE SEEN AT END OF TUNNEL. MANY EXPECTED SANCTIONS
MIGHT BE LIFTED SOON AND RHODESIA WOULD ONCE AGAIN FIND
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ITSELF MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN GOOD STANDING.

3. RECENT WEEKS HAVE SEEN VARIETY OF FACTORS COME TO
BEAR THAT HAVE GREATLY DISCOURAGED WHITE RHODESIANS.
GENEVA TALKS SEEM TO HAVE STALLED WITH HARDENING OF BOTH
RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT AND NATIONALISTS' ATTITUDES. MANY
WHITES FEEL RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN BAD FAITH IN NOT

MOVING FORWARD MORE RAPIDLY ON PRINCIPLE OF TRANSFER TO MAJORITY RULE. OTHERS ARE JUST IMPATIENT AT LACK OF MOVEMENT TOWARDS SETTLEMENT, ANY SETTLEMENT, AND CONSEQUENT STATE OF LIMBO RHODESIA FINDS ITSELF IN. AT SAME TIME GUERRILLA WAR HAS CONTINUED TO ESCALATE. CASUALTIES ON BOTH SIDES HAVE RISEN DRAMATICALLY. SOME AREAS OF COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY SOUTHEAST, HAVE BECOME VIRTUAL COMBAT ZONES. TRAVEL IS CONTROLLED AND FARMS ARE FORTIFIED AND PROVIDED GUARDS WITH GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE.

4. TOLL OF WARFARE IS BEING GENERALLY FELT MORE POINTEDLY. NEW REGULATIONS ON SERVICE ELIGIBILITY AND TIGHTENING OF DEFERMENTS HAS AFFECTED ALMOST ALL SERVICE AGE (17-40) MEN OFTEN TO DETRIMENT OF JOBS AND STUDIES. (PRESS RECENTLY ESTIMATED THAT AT ANY ONE TIME 30 PERCENT OF ELIGIBLE WHITES ARE ON ACTIVE SERVICE). CASUALTIES ARE WIDESPREAD ENOUGH NOW TO IMPACT PERSONALLY ON ENTIRE COMMUNITY, WITH 1976 THE WORST YEAR EXPERIENCED SINCE START OF GUERRILLA WAR. ECONOMY IS ALSO BEGINNING TO SUFFER. BUSINESSES ARE FEELING PINCH. ACCORDING TO THE POINT MAGAZINE, SALES, MANUFACTURING AND THEREFORE REAL NATIONAL PRODUCT HAVE ALL DROPPED SIGNIFICANTLY. TOURISM IS SLIPPING WITH MORE THAN ONE THIRD FEWER VISITORS IN 1976 COMPARED TO 1975. TOURIST HOTELS HAVE BEEN FORCED TO CLOSE (PRETORIA A-233, 1976) OR LAY OFF STAFF, WITH ONE GROUP RECENTLY DISMISSING 300 EMPLOYEES AS "HOLDING" OPERATION UNTIL CRISIS ABATES. DEFENSE EXPENDITURES HAVE RISEN FROM RHODESIAN DOLS 42 MILLION IN 1972-73, JUST AFTER OUTBREAK OF CURRENT HOSTILITIES, TO 162 MILLION IN 1976/77, OR 23 PER CENT OF TOTAL BUDGET.

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5. IN FACE OF THIS DETERIORATION, SMITH STICKS DOGGEDLY TO FIVE-POINT PLAN AND TALKS SOMEWHAT FATALISTICALLY OF HISTORY'S JUDGMENT ON "BRAVE STAND OF SO SMALL A NATION." ONLY INITIATIVE SHOWN IN RECENT WEEKS IS ENCOURAGEMENT, IF NOT INSTIGATION, OF NEW BLACK INTERNAL MODERATE PARTY TO COUNTERACT MILITANT NATIONALISTS OUTSIDE RHODESIA (PRETORIA 0024).

6. A GROWING SEGMENT OF WHITE RHODESIA HAS BEGUN TO REACT TO THESE FRUSTRATIONS. SIMMERING DISSATISFACTION WITH WIDE-SPREAD CALL-UPS AND EXTENSIONS IN MILITARY HAS FOMENTED ANGRY LETTERS AND PROTESTS FOR LAST SEVERAL MONTHS (PRETORIA A-230, 1976). 1976 HAS SEEN, FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 1965, NET DEPARTURE OF WHITES AND RUMORS OF STILL MORE (PRETORIA -232, 1976, AND PRETORIA 5911). HOWEVER, GENERAL UNEASE HAS GROWN MARKEDLY IN LAST SEVERAL WEEKS WITH IMPASSE IN GENEVA. PRESS ACCOUNTS HAVE HIGHLIGHTED WOMAN'S GROUP FOR PEACE CALLED CO-ORD-A-NATION WHICH HAS

OBTAINED PETITIONS WITH 40,000 SIGNATURES AND STAGED TWO DEMONSTRATIONS IN DOWNTOWN SALISBURY (BOTH BROKEN UP BY POLICE) CALLING FOR SMITH TO ACCEPT BRITISH PROPOSALS ON INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND MOVE QUICKLY TO MAJORITY RULE. RHODESIAN PARTY (RP) HAD INTERNAL SHAKEUP PARTIALLY OVER ATTITUDES TOWARD MAJORITY RULE (PRETORIA A-007) AND, ON JANUARY 10, ANNOUNCED, ALONG WITH CENTRE PARTY (CP) AND ANTIONAL PLEDGE ASSOCIATION, FORMATION OF NEW MODERATE "COUNCIL" TO ASSURE SWIFT INTRODUCTION OF MAJORITY RULE. BOTH RP AND CP ARE MODERATE TO LIBERAL OPPOSITION PARTIES AND NATIONAL PLEDGE ASSOCIATION IS NON-POLITICAL GROUP FORMED LAST YEAR WITH AIM OF ELIMINATING ALL RACIAL DISCRIMINATION. IT HAS RUN HIGHLY VISIBLE CAMPAIGN TO GET ALL RHODESIANS TO "TAKE THE PLEDGE" AND CLAIMS MAJORITY FOLLOWING OF WHITES.

7. COMMENT: GROWING MILITARY CRISIS AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS SEEM TO BE CONTRIBUTING TO DISSOLUTION OF WHAT FOR YEARS WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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RELATIVELY SOLID WHITE FRONT.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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